

THE BRIDGE

News from Delta Dental of Tennessee



Hernando De Soto Bridge, Memphis

WINTER 2018

Delta Dental of Tennessee's Smile180 Foundation is transforming lives, one smile at a time.



Delta Dental of Tennessee established the Smile180 Foundation to secure long-term, endowed funding to three fundamental pillars: free and reduced-cost dental clinics, children's hospitals, and oral health education, including dental schools. Since its inception, Smile180 has distributed

more than \$12 million to help improve the oral health and overall well-being of Tennesseans.

In January we begin a year-long celebration of Smile180's 5-year anniversary. When the Smile180 initiative launched in 2014, we had identified about a dozen clinics to support. Today, that number has more than doubled. We host all of these clinics for an annual workshop to provide educational keynotes as well as forums for learning best practices from each other so they can collectively provide a greater impact on creating smiles across Tennessee.

Beginning in this issue, we will be highlighting some of these clinics and the volunteers who make the work happen. See Dr. Rick Guthrie's article on page 3 to find out what volunteering can do for you and your team.

2019 Dental Handbook Now Available

We want to be a company you can depend on for the latest insurance-related information. With that in mind, the latest Delta Dental Dentist Handbook is now available on our website and through your Delta Dental of Tennessee professional relations team. It includes procedure codes and definitions, as well as basic guidelines for serving Delta Dental customers.

You can request your copy of the dentist handbook through DeltaDentalTN.com, or our Professional Relations team is also happy to send an electronic copy via email. Just send your request to ProfessionalRelations1@DeltaDentalTN.com.

Tax ID Changes?

We want to be sure we have your practice's current information in our system. Call our Professional Relations department at 800-223-3104 to make changes for 2019!

Dental Home by Age 1?



parent. Dental professionals are uniquely qualified to teach new parents about how oral health connects to the rest of the body, everything from how a child eats and talks to how they grow and develop.

You know better than anyone that tooth decay hurts. It's the most common chronic childhood disease, but parents may not know that it is also preventable. Teaching parents about the importance of a healthy diet and encouraging them to read labels about sugar content are easy ways to promote oral health in your patients.

Also, parents will sometimes bring in their children when they won't come themselves. Encouraging dental visits for little ones can remind the adults that they need dental care as well.

Dental Home. Little ones are accident-prone, and when they fall and injure a baby tooth or damage a gum on a toy, parents need to know who to call and where to turn for help and reassurance. If your office has seen a child since he or she was small, you've given parents a reliable, professional place to call in an emergency. You'll also have an established history with the little patient.

Patient Comfort. Starting a patient off right with simple checkups and gentle cleanings lets children know that a dentist or hygienist isn't someone to fear. Dental phobias often start at a young age, especially if a child's first trip to the dentist is because he or she is in pain or needs a cavity filled.

Helping your patients understand that it's important to give their children a good dental foundation can open up little ones to a life of good health and beautiful smiles.

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentists recommends that children see the dentist for the first time when their first tooth erupts, or by age 1.

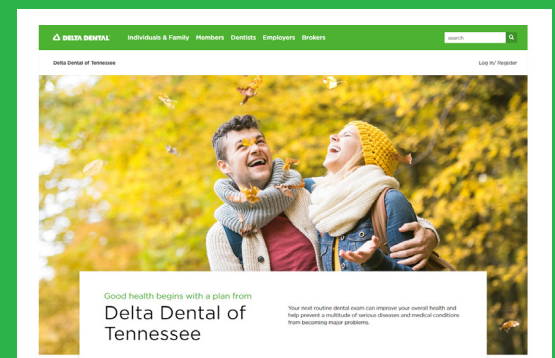
Delta Dental agrees with the AAPD. Establishing a relationship with a dentist at an early age introduces the idea of regular checkups and creates habits that can set a child up for a lifetime of healthy smiles.

Why so early?

Education. Adults begin a whole new phase of their lives when they have children. They may do a great job taking care of their own teeth, but learning to take care of someone else's is a new skill, and they may need help. Most parents see the value in regular pediatrician visits, but a pediatrician may not have the kind of information about oral health that a dentist could share with a new

Check out the new DeltaDentalTN.com!

DeltaDentalTN.com has a new look and feel. You will still have access to the same great tools through our toolkits, and your log-ins and information stay the same. You will find even more great content and oral health information to share with your patients as well as easier navigation on our site, and an area exclusively for dental professionals.



Smile180 Volunteer Spotlight

The Personal Impact of Volunteering

by Rick Guthrie, D.D.S., Johnson City



About 20 years ago on Christmas Eve, I received a phone call. A gentleman was in extreme pain and needed immediate dental care. I packed up the instruments and materials I thought I might need and headed up to Healing Hands Health Center in Bristol. I didn't plan to work on the holiday nor did I really care to, to be quite honest, but it was a situation that was put in front of me.

My decision to help this man in need did, in fact, change my life. The relief in his eyes that Christmas Eve and the sincere appreciation made me realize the impact my daily work can have on someone else. I will never forget that night.

As a charter member of Healing Hands Health Center, a charitably run clinic in upper East Tenn., I have seen the difference a few hours of my volunteer time can make in the life of someone else. Yes, I need to work in my office to earn a living and support all who work for me but putting these skills to work for one of Tennessee's many charitable clinics can also help someone who can't afford to come into my office today. By restoring their smiles and their health, it can also restore their confidence and change their life.

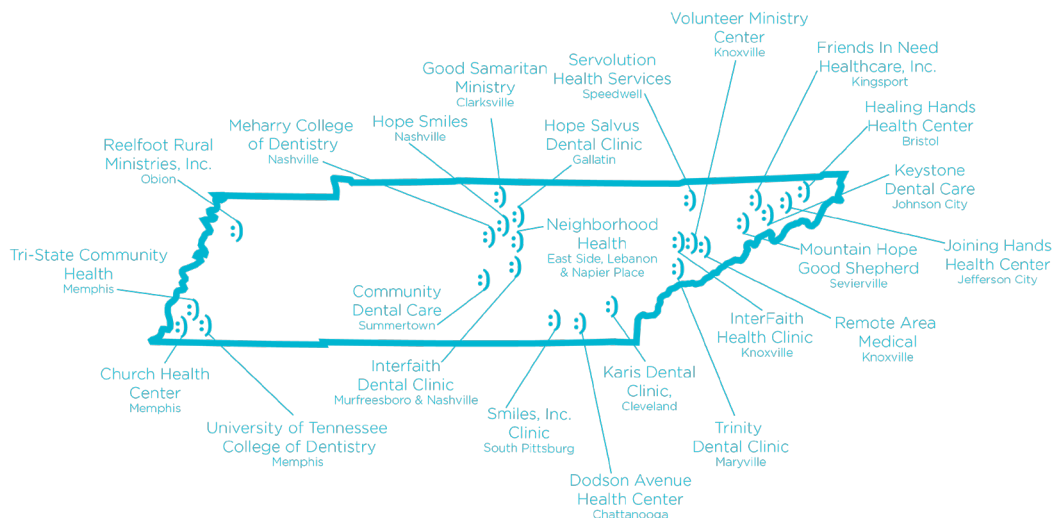
When we first started Healing Hands, the dental equipment was donated from someone's office. While it was a donation that was greatly appreciated, after a few years in operation it was sorely lacking. In 2014, Delta Dental of Tennessee created the Smile180 initiative, now a foundation, to help clinics like Healing Hands get first-quality, new equipment. Gone were the days that I needed to bring in my own hand tools to work with the patients.

Delta Dental and Smile180 have provided state-of-the-art equipment to more than 20 clinics across the state, creating environments that uphold the dignity of the patient and provide any dentist the instruments needed to treat them.

This year, the State Board of Dentistry will start allowing volunteer time to qualify for CE. This is a great opportunity for us, as dentists, to get the necessary requirements for maintaining our license as well as serve our fellow Tennesseans in need. We are the "Volunteer State" for a reason!

Looking for a place to volunteer?

Smile180 Foundation publishes an annual directory of the free and reduced-cost clinics across Tennessee. You can find it online at Smile180.com. Any of them would appreciate your time and support.



Important Information About Phone Inquiries

Due to HIPAA concerns, effective January 1, 2019, Delta Dental of Tennessee will ***no longer accept phone inquiries from third party solutions*** such as Medusind, BPOSS, and Clinicspectrum who initiate calls to obtain benefits and eligibility information on behalf of dental offices.

Research shows that some third party entities are not accredited with the Better Business Bureau and cannot be adequately verified. We are therefore concerned about disclosing our members' PHI to these entities.

Per HIPAA, the Privacy Rule generally requires covered entities to take reasonable steps to limit the use or disclosure of, and requests for, protected health information to the minimum necessary to accomplish the intended purpose.

The average call length with these third-party solution vendors is in excess of 10 minutes (some more than 30 minutes) requesting benefits of up to 40 patients at times, multiple codes, run downs, plus complete claims history, which we believe may not meet the minimum necessary requirement under the Privacy Rule.

Although Delta Dental of Tennessee will no longer provide member benefits information to third party services by phone, dental providers can still retrieve benefit and eligibility information by phone, by accessing the Delta Dental website, or by submitting pretreatment estimates. We appreciate your cooperation as we work together to protect our members and your patients.

Meet Delta Dental of Tennessee's Board of Directors



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